

A report requested by the Governor
of the state of Washington

Cable Median Barrier

Reassessment and Recommendations Update

September 2008

Paula Hammond

Secretary of Transportation

John R. Batiste

Chief, Washington State Patrol



Title VI

WSDOT ensures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin or sex in the provision of benefits and services resulting from its federally assisted programs and activities. For questions regarding WSDOT's Title VI Program, you may contact the Department's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705 7098.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information

If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format – large print, Braille, cassette tape, or on computer disk, please call (360) 705-7097. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, please call the Washington State Telecommunications Relay Service, or Tele-Braille at 7-1-1, Voice 1 800 833 6384, and ask to be connected to (360) 705-7097.



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Paula J. Hammond
Secretary of Transportation



John R. Batiste
Chief, Washington State Patrol

August 2008

Governor Chris Gregoire
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Gregoire:

Please accept the 2008 update to the "Cable Median Barrier, Reassessment and Recommendations" report as part of our continuing evaluation and monitoring of cable median barrier performance in our state. Providing highways on which families can travel reasonably safely and return home each night is a top priority for both the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Washington State Patrol. This update confirms that cable median barriers save lives.

Where cable median barrier has been installed, there has been a 73 percent reduction in crossover collisions. In the locations we have chosen to install cable barriers, they have either outperformed or performed as well as other types of barrier in all but one location. This program has played a significant role in the reduction in fatal collisions that have occurred on Washington State highways over the last 13 years. At the same time, we're decreasing congestion by reducing the risk of collisions that often shut down our highways and create hours of traffic delay.

This report updates last year's report with 2007 collision data. The results continue to confirm Dr. Malcolm Ray's 2007 independent review, that cable median barriers are an effective method of reducing median crossover collisions in Washington State. Although no barrier can prevent all collisions in every situation, fatal collision rates continue to decline on our state highways.

In 2007 all of the remaining segments of cable barrier installations funded through the 2003 and 2005 transportation funding packages were under construction or completed. The quick delivery of the program has reduced the number of fatal and serious collisions on these highways.

WSDOT continues to be recognized as a national leader in reducing fatal collisions and the cable barrier program is being studied by other states as a best practice. Almost every state in the country is now using cable barrier, and states that have installed cables have seen a reduction in fatal and serious collisions.

The design of cable median barriers and other barrier types is an evolving technology. WSDOT has led in the development of research that continues to enhance the performance of our systems. The recommendations made by Dr. Ray are the basis for new research initiated by WSDOT and are supported by national transportation organizations. In this update, we describe our research efforts and how the results are being used for barrier placement and design. We also detail the implementation of Dr. Ray's recommendations.

With the continuing support of the Governor's Office and the Washington State Legislature, we will implement, monitor, and improve our cable barrier program so that we can "Keep Washington Moving."

Our staff will be pleased to answer your questions or provide further information.

Sincerely,

Paula J. Hammond
Secretary of Transportation

John R. Batiste
Chief, Washington State Patrol